



Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice

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NEWS BULLETIN

May 31, 2012

Status of Current Budget Proposal for OJJ

A message from Dr. Livers to all OJJ Staff:

The current budget process happening in the legislature has created much attention. With that process, there have been unknowns that concern and affect the entire agency. There has been discussion on our budget, the fate of community based services and consolidation of OJJ's and GOHSEP's back-office functions with Department of Public Safety (DPS). I would like to let you all know what the current proposed budget holds for OJJ. Right now, our budget is contained in a bill that must be agreed to by the Senate and the House of Representatives.

The fiscal year (FY) runs from July 1, 2011, through June 31, 2012, and is referred to as FY '12. The FY '12 existing budget that OJJ is operating under now is \$143 million agency wide.

The budget process begins with a proposed executive budget at the beginning of the legislative session and is contained in House Bill 1, referred to as "HB 1." The proposed FY '13 budget in HB 1 at the beginning of session was \$119 million. This is the budget we would operate on for next fiscal year, July 1, 2012 through June 31, 2013. This is a 24 million dollar reduction from our current budget. This reduction will be realized through eliminating 30 vacant positions that remain unfilled throughout the agency, a reduction in operating services such as travel, supplies, acquisitions and contract services which had low client numbers and a reduced need.

The budget process starts in the House Appropriations committee and once approved, goes to the House floor for all Louisiana representatives to vote on. During that vote, several amendments were added to HB 1. These amendments resulted in an additional proposed 9 million dollar cut to OJJ. That proposed cut was to be taken through community based services contracts.

The next step was a hearing in the Senate Finance committee. That committee reversed the House amendments and put the 9 million dollars back into OJJ's budget. In addition, the committee proposed further consolidation with DPS and a two million dollar cut to OJJ's budget, by elimination or transfer of 36 positions related to management and finance, IT, and human resources. The positions will come from central office, community based services field offices and all three facilities. This means that DPS will be responsible for hiring and layoffs, payroll, the OJJ budget, contracts, purchases, payments and computer issues and maintenance including our JETS system. Here at central office we are working

diligently to determine how to have a smooth internal transition with minimal interruption of services both in the facilities and community, and minimal disruptions to our youth and staff.

As OJJ currently stands today, May 31, 2012, our proposed FY '13 budget is 117 million dollars with a reduction of 30 vacant positions and another 36 positions to either be eliminated or transferred to DPS, with DPS then taking on those office functions.

Today, the entire body of Senators debated and passed HB 1. Now, the Senate and the House will have to agree on the changes made. After both sides agree, and the vote is final, the bill goes to the Governor's office for signature and becomes law.

The legislative session closes Monday, so we should have information soon. We will let everyone know once we are certain about the budget, the consolidation and the effect on positions. OJJ knows the value of our employees and we count on you every day to help meet the mission.